

REMARKS

The Applicant thanks the Examiner for the detailed, non-final Office Action mailed on July 26, 2005, including the indication of allowability of Claims 5, 8, and 9. This Reply and Amendment is intended to be completely responsive to the non-final Office Action.

Status of the Claims

Claims 1-9 and 44-46 are currently pending.

Claims 1-2, 6, and 7 stand rejected.

Claims 5, 8, and 9 are objected to as depending from a rejected Claim.

Claims 10-43 have been cancelled.

Claim 1 is currently amended.

Claims 44-46 have been added to add claims of varying scope.

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present Application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Objections to the Specification

On page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner objected to the claim of priority for failing to include an identification of the relationship with a priority application. The paragraph has been amended to recite the relationship. Accordingly, applicants respectfully request removal of the objection to the specification.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

On pages 2-3 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1, 6, and 7 as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,412,565 titled “Expandable Screen Jacket and Methods of using Same” by Castano-Mears (“Castano-Mears”) under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b). With this amendment, Claim 1 has been amended.

Claim 1, as amended recites an expandable sand screen including “wherein the base filter layer and the separable filter layer are not directly connected to the base pipe.” Claims 6 and 7 depend from Claim 1.

Castano-Mears does not teach or disclose an expandable sand screen wherein the base filter layer and the separable filter layer are not directly connected to the base pipe. Accordingly, independent claim 1 and dependent claims 6 and 7 are not anticipated by Castano-Mears.

On page 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1, 6, and 7 as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,901,789 titled “Deformable Well Screen” by Donnelly et al. (“Donnelly”) under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b). With this amendment, Claim 1 has been amended.

Claim 1, as amended recites an expandable sand screen including “wherein the base filter layer and the separable filter layer are not directly connected to the base pipe.” Claims 6 and 7 depend from Claim 1.

Donnelly does not teach or disclose an expandable sand screen wherein the base filter layer and the separable filter layer are not directly connected to the base pipe. Accordingly, independent claim 1 and dependent claims 6 and 7 are not anticipated by Donnelly.

The Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 10, 11, 23, 26, 28, 30, and 31 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

On page 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 6, and 7 as unpatentable over Castano-Mears or Donnelly in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,478,092 titled “Well Completion Method and Apparatus” by Voll et al. (“Voll”) under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). With this amendment, Claim 1, has been amended.

Claim 1, as amended recites an expandable sand screen including “wherein the base filter layer and the separable filter layer are not directly connected to the base pipe.” Claims 6 and 7 depend from Claim 1.

Neither Castano-Mears nor Donnelly teaches or discloses an expandable sand screen wherein the base filter layer and the separable filter layer are not directly connected to the base pipe. Voll does not cure this deficiency in either Castano-Mears or Donnelly. Accordingly, dependent Claims 2 and 3 are not obvious in view of either Castano-Mears or Donnelly in view of Voll.

The Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 2 and 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Claim Objections

On page 2 of the office action, the examiner objected to claims 5, 8, and 9 as dependent from a rejected base claim. Claims 5, 8, and 9 depend from claim 1 which, for the reasons stated above, is allowable. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the objections to claims 5, 8 and 9.

* * * *

The Applicant believes that the present Application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the Application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if the Examiner believes that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present Application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this Application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 06-1447. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 06-1447. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136.

Please direct all correspondence to the undersigned attorney or agent at the address indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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By 

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